

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of providing entitlement services information to users, comprising:
receiving a request for entitlement services information for a particular user;
and
in response to receiving the request, accessing a common entitlement services information repository; wherein the common entitlement services information repository associates entitlement services with products to which the entitlement services attach and with users of the products; wherein each of at least a portion of the plurality of users is associated with at least two products.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the common entitlement services information repository associates a combination of an entitlement service, a product and a user with a geographic region.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least two products comprise at least one hardware product and at least one software product.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the request is issued by a Web based application.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the request is issued by a first application invoked by the particular user browsing a Web site.
6. The method of claim 5, wherein the first application is configured to provide support for only a portion of a plurality of entitlement services represented in the common entitlement services information repository.
7. The method of claim 5, further comprising:
responding to the request by providing the first application with entitlement services information for the particular user; and

passing the entitlement services information for the particular user from the first application to a second application.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising populating the common entitlement services information repository with entitlement services data contained in a plurality of entitlement services databases each of which are specific to a particular product.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein populating comprises associating a combination of an entitlement service, a product and a user with a geographic region.

10. An entitlement services system, comprising:
a common entitlement services information system comprising a repository associating entitlement services with products to which the entitlement services attach and with users of the products; wherein each of at least a portion of the plurality of users is associated with at least two products.

11. The system of claim 10, further comprising at least one server hosting a plurality of applications each configured to issue requests to the common entitlement services information system for entitlement services information and each configured to pass the entitlement services information between one another.

12. The system of claim 10, wherein the repository associates a combination of an entitlement service, a product and a user with a geographic region.

13. The system of claim 10, wherein each of at least a portion of the plurality of users is associated with at least two products.

14. The system of claim 10, wherein the at least two products comprise at least one hardware product and at least one software product.

15. The system of claim 10, further comprising at least one server hosting a plurality of applications each configured to issue requests to the common entitlement services information system for entitlement services information; wherein each of the plurality of applications is configured to provide support for only a portion of a plurality of entitlement services represented in the repository.

16. The system of claim 15, further comprising a web server hosting a Web service providing an interface to each of the plurality of applications.

17. The system of claim 15, wherein the plurality of applications are invoked by browser requests.

18. The system of claim 10, further comprising a plurality of entitlement services databases from which entitlement services information is replicated to the common entitlement services information repository.

19. The system of claim 18, wherein each of the plurality of entitlement services databases is specific to a particular product.

20. The system of claim 18, wherein each of the plurality of entitlement services databases is specific to a particular geographic region.

21. An entitlement services system, comprising:

- (a) a common entitlement services information system, comprising:
 - a repository associating entitlement services with products to which the entitlement services attach and with users of the products; wherein each of at least a portion of the plurality of users is associated with at least two products; and
 - an access control software component configured to access the repository in response to entitlement services information requests;
- (b) at least one server executing a plurality of Web based applications configured to issue the entitlement services information requests; and

(c) a web server hosting a Web service providing an interface to each of the plurality of applications.

22. The system of claim 21, wherein each of the plurality of applications is configured to provide support for only a portion of a plurality of entitlement services represented in the repository.

23. The system of claim 21, wherein the plurality of applications are invoked by browser requests.

24. The system of claim 21, wherein the plurality of applications are each configured to pass the entitlement services information between one another.

25. The system of claim 21, wherein the repository associates a combination of an entitlement service, a product and a user with a geographic region.

26. The system of claim 21, wherein the at least two products comprise at least one hardware product and at least one software product.

27. The system of claim 21, further comprising a plurality of entitlement services databases from which entitlement services information is replicated to the common entitlement services information repository.

28. The system of claim 27, wherein each of the plurality of entitlement services databases is specific to a particular product.

29. The system of claim 27, wherein each of the plurality of entitlement services databases is specific to a particular geographic region.